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MODERN INTERIORS

HERBERT HOFFMANN

MODERN INTERIORS

IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

WITH 292 ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON: THE STUDIO LIMITED

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Architecture 601248

c

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PREFACE

The aim of this volume is far-reaching: it endeavours to reveal the new attitude towards interior decoration of every kind, and to embrace its manifestations in every civilised land.

The importance of the part played by restaurants, theatres, cinemas, stores, factories, etc., in contemporary architecture has led us to include them, and thus go far beyond the conventional survey of the living room and its equipment. And finally the inclusion of staircase and entrance halls of public and industrial buildings finds its justification in the modern view that interior decoration is not merely an isolated activity, the subsequent treatment of a given room, but that its conception must be inherent in the structural origins.

The extension of the field of survey over all Europe and America, as far even as Japan, does not arise from any conscious striving after internationalism, but from a recognition of parallel tendencies in the new architectural and decorative schools of all countries. Just as formerly the conjunction of new, revolutionary, intellectual and technical discoveries was marked by new and widely-spreading form, so too in our own day it would be idle to deny that there has arisen a new and widely-spread conception of form, which draws its impulse from the new technical means at our disposal, and from our changed way of life.

After the rapid changes in taste in the decade before and after the turn of the century, we are rather suspicious of any attempt to discover a new form. It must, we feel, arise naturally, of itself. If a form is appraised as having difinitely arisen, we are apt, with some justice, to feel uneasy about it, because we suspect it may merely be another new and fleeting fashion; an uneasiness which is intensified by the opposition rivalry that always accompanies any new form. It must, therefore, be left to later generations to pass final judgment upon what has already been achieved in this direction: then it will receive the same coolly critical treatment as is accorded by every epoch to its precursors, and to that just past by every present generation.

But to-day we can presume to believe that the 19th century marked the end, more or less, of a certain form: finality achieved, it contented itself with reviving this or the other of its aspects. These aspects, chiefly decorative and ornamental styles, in the main embodied the form. They were studied most industriously and applied most lavishly and without qualm to buildings and furniture, which were the fruit of quite different impulse, need and circumstance. However, the more exactly was the detail copied, the more pure in form was deemed the product.

In contemporary judgment, attention to such external marks of form recedes far in importance behind the ultimate totality of effect. To-day we look upon style as the stultification of all that is vital in an epoch: to us, form does not arise aesthetically pure from the will of artist or craftsman, it is not the result of juggling with forms and figures, but it is, in the final analysis, the external expression of the social, intellectual, and spiritual tendencies of an epoch, determined by the technical means at its disposal. From this standpoint, every age must produce its own self-expressive form: it must, it is true, take into consideration what has been bequeathed it by former ages, but any invocation of ancient forms must be condemned as sorcery, hardening our hearts to truth.

This viewpoint has by no means only been adopted since the war. The struggle against the incrustation of our surroundings by amorphous masses of ornamentation began much earlier. The war merely stopped its progress for a while, only to release it again in greater fury. Added to this, our material impoverishment, and spiritual mistrust of the gross and smug, have hastened the cleansing process, and revealed what is new and modern, visible to, and understandable of all.

The search for economical, unornamented form can to-day without exaggeration be termed an international movement: but nevertheless it has affected different countries in differing degree,

and has by no means led to parallel achievements in them. Holland may be said to be one of the pioneer countries, and perhaps, the country — originating in vast rebuilding and settlement schemes — in which the new architectural outlook has had the greatest practical effect. France has its prophet in Le Corbusier, and the most radically formulated programme, but its influence and spread have been counteracted by a deep, native reverence of tradition, and by a certain tendency to turn modernism into a new juggling with form. Decentralised Germany has in many places been converted to the new tenets, and has solved its architectural problems latterly arising under their influence. This applies in the same degree to Czechoslovakia: while in Switzerland and Austria the new movement is represented by small but extremely important groups: in conservative Hungary it has so far been confined to the very few. Spain and Latin America for the moment can only point to isolated experiments in the new spirit, and in Italy adherents are numerically small but extremely active. The Anglo-Saxon countries have, naturally enough, offered the most determined resistance to the onslaught on tradition. England fell back upon the advantage held by her in domestic architecture through the centuries. As far at least as interior decoration is concerned, the new gospel found its way into the U.S.A. via Paris and her exhibitions, and latterly also through Germany. In the Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, modernism has attained a high peak of cultivated classicism, and acquired a new refinement. Russia has subscribed whole-heartedly to the new faith, but has arrived as yet at but small practical realisation of it. And finally, in the Far East, in Japan, a vigourous group of young architects and decorators has arisen, giving full recognition to the new European order, and striving consciously to conjoin it with their native outlook and requirements.

The programmes of these groups and personalities in the various countries are by no means identical. Happily, racial characteristics, despite the constant intercourse between capital cities, still remain the determining factors. Conditions, intellectual and physical, vary greatly in the different countries into which the new ideas have penetrated. All these things have led, despite a general unity of tendency, to a happy and pleasing variety of effect. Side by side with creations evolved coldly according to strict schedule we see others that can only be designated as romantic, and between them every stage of transition from the old to the new, together with an opposition rivalry of no mean extent.

Whether the problem of an interior has been successfully solved is easier to determine than to choose examples for such a book as this, which must of necessity include much that is experimental and tentative. The Editor therefore begs that he may not be reproached for the inclusion or exclusion of this or the other work. It has been our reasonable desire to reveal the little known and unknown as far as possible, and in pursuit of this policy, much accredited and widely recognised work has had to suffer exclusion. The reproach of incompleteness can hardly, in view of the extensiveness of the subject, be fairly raised.

Our main view and aim has been to reveal actually existing interiors which are the most significant for their respective countries of origin: the swift course of decorative evolution must excuse the inclusion of work that is already superseded. That much which is purely experimental and much which is purely indicative should be shown here is, of course, inevitable.

Professor Bruno Taut has already surveyed, authoritatively and excellently, the new impulse and conception in Architekture*, and much has been written by lesser men both before and after him on the same subject. Josef Margold was early in our own field and gave fine inspiration to his fellow workers in the new movement. To him the time seemed ripe for the question to be posed: What new conception of interior decoration has arisen from the new conception of architecture? What means does it employ to create its aesthetic values? What is its expression of our varying human moods — solemn pomp, care-free festivity, grave religious ecstasy?

It is no accident that this new creative will, arising from the chaos of war and its aftermath of revolution, should no longer be concerned with the solitary and stately homes of the great and powerful, but with public, popular edifices of every description and great factories and works. Mass production and engineering constructions have come to the fore. They have demanded

* Bruno Taut, Modern Architecture. The Studio Ltd.

recognition and have obtained it. Good mass production no longer need appear coyly in the bonnet of handicraft, and engineering construction can discard the stucco mask of the pseudo-palace.

Arising out of practical architectural necessities, this demand for constructional statement has penetrated into the sacred domain of the cultural edifice and the cultural interior. The modern church reveals its construction no less clearly than the Gothic or Romanesque, but it is a new construction in which iron and concrete determine the form. The strength of steel girders gives vast, clear roof spaces, its lines are firm and straight, and simple glass spheres provide the necessary artificial lighting. The cross beams bridge the interior with mathematically calculated strength and order and the tall pillars stand unadorned. The atmosphere of gravity and devotion is induced by the solemn proportion of mass and truth of material, factors which must ever play their part in good, true building. And from the church and place of public assembly it is no far cry to the vast industrial edifices of our time, whose construction is given over to the engineer, for they are nearest akin to the modern spirit, and most remote from all superfluous ornament and trimming.

And now, with the refinement and spiritualisation of coolly calculated rational form, we ourselves are become more capable of appreciating its beauty, whether sought or imposed, and we cannot deny that the aesthetically valuable creations of the engineer have so far changed our outlook and emotions that we are in some danger of taking almost childish delight in furniture and living room equipment, merely because of their technique and construction, and without reference to use or method of manufacture. But on the whole, we can believe that we are treading the straight path to truthfulness and genuineness when we come to the end of the examples here shewn, and reflect upon them, and draw our conclusions about the reasons that led to their inclusion: No pomposity of ornamentation! — No attempt at emulation of the lavishness of palace or pleasure-house, but an integral sureness of poise, and the clear will to rational achievement of purpose by the shortest and straightest route.

HERBERT HOFFMANN

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Richard J. Neutra, Los Angeles. Hall

MUNICIPAL SCHOOL OF ART
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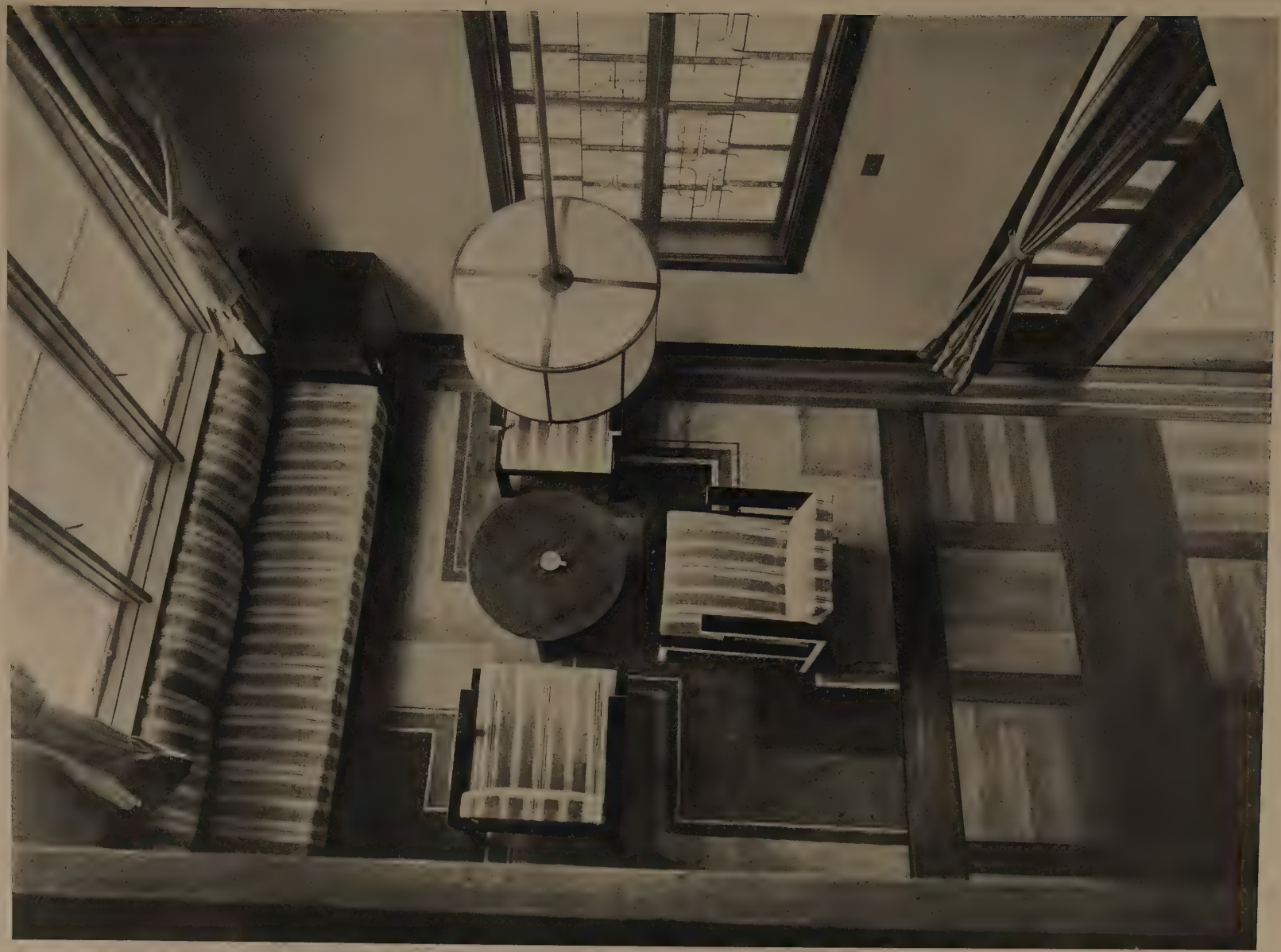
Joubert and Petit, Paris. Corner of a studio

R. M. Schindler, Los Angeles. Fire-place

ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

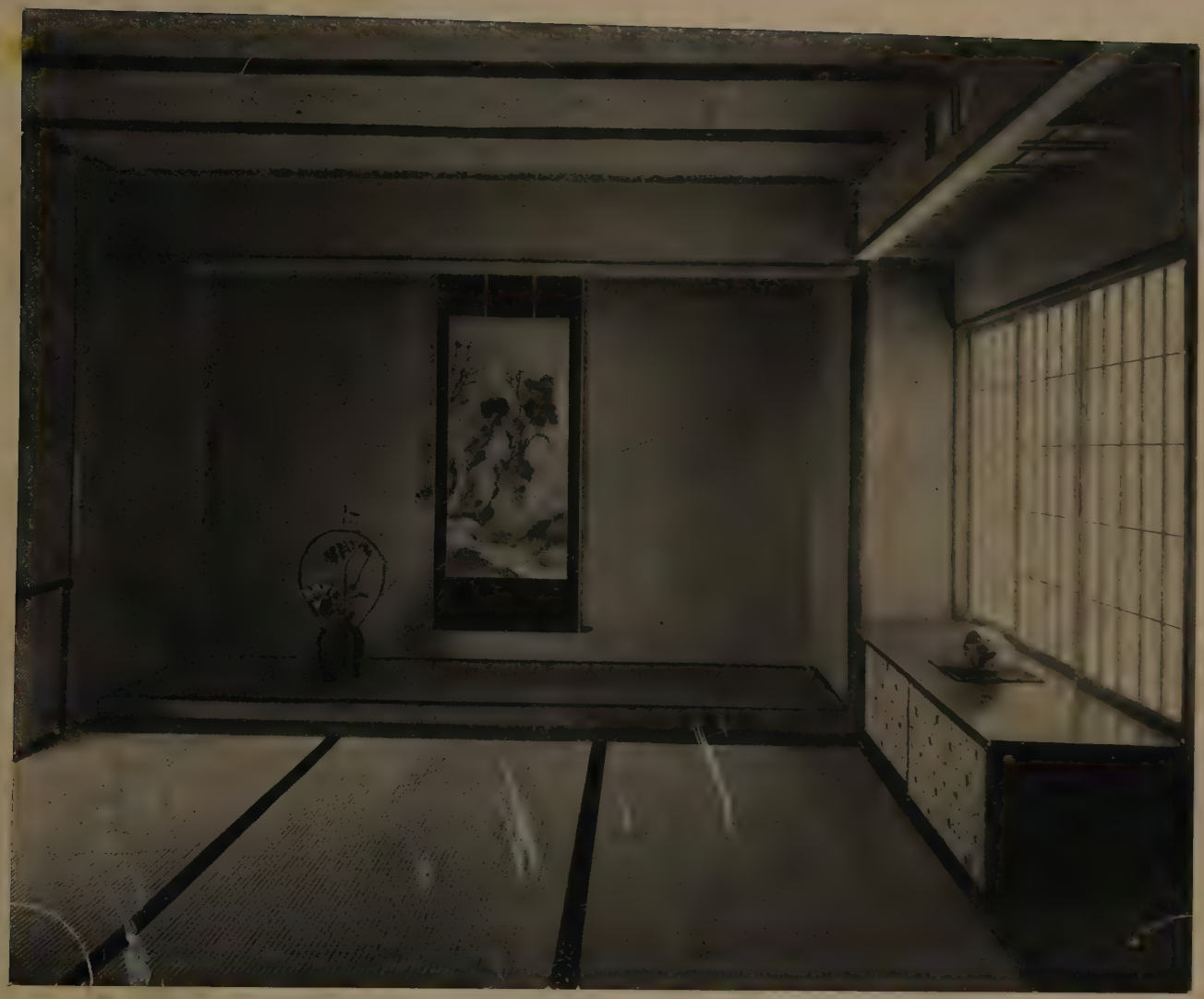
Bohuslav Fuchs, Brno. Hall



5

Masabumi Ito, Kyoto. Small lounge

Victor Bourgeois, Brussels. Upper landing



Koji Fujii, Kyoto. Living room

Adolf Rading, Breslau. Ante-room
Frette, Libera, Figini, Pollini, Milan. Hall

Djo-Bourgeois, Paris. Living room

L. H. de Koninck, Brussels. Library over a studio

Robert Block (Studio „Athelia"), Paris. Lounge hall — Pierre Barbe, Paris. Lounge hall

Armin Meili, Lucerne. Hall

Paul Griesser, Bielefeld. Lounge

Michael Rachlis, Berlin. Hall in marble

René Prou, Paris. Architect's studio

Le Corbusier — P. Jeanneret — Ch. Perriand, Paris. Living room

Djo-Bourgeois, Paris. Living room

Hans Schumacher, Cologne. Living room

Theodor Merrill, Cologne. Living room

Ludwig Kozma, Budapest. Cupboard for a living room

Easton and Robertson, London. Window seat

Adolf Rading, Breslau. Living room in a flat — Kurt von Schmalensee, Norköping (Swede). Main living room

Kurt von Schmalensee, Norköping (Swede). Living room

Erwin Gutkind, Berlin. Simple living room

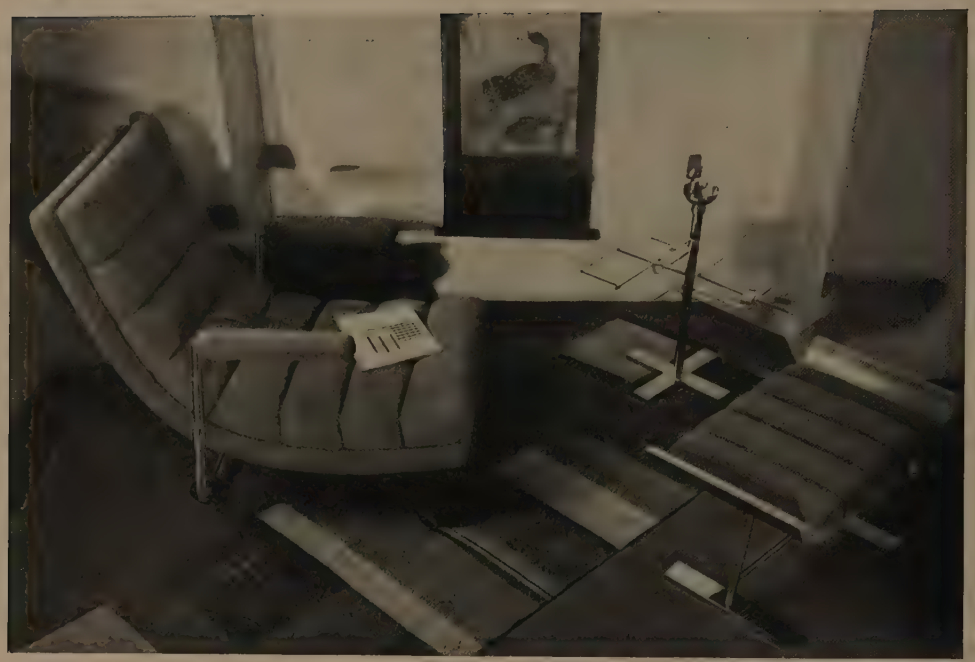
Djo-Bourgeois, Paris. Fire-place
Walther Sobotka, Vienna. Living room

Howard T. Fisher, Hubbard Woods, U.S.A. Library

Djo-Bourgeois, Paris. Living room

Robert Block (Studio „Athelia"), Paris. Living room

Otto Haesler, Celle. Living rooms



Ludwig Kozma, Budapest. Chairs and corner of living room

Max Ernst Haefeli, Zurich. Living room — Richard Döcker, Stuttgart. Study

Paul Griesser, Bielefeld. Furnished flat

A. L. Kocher and G. Ziegler, New York. Corner of a study

Marcel Breuer, Berlin. Office
Richard Hächler, Aarau. Study

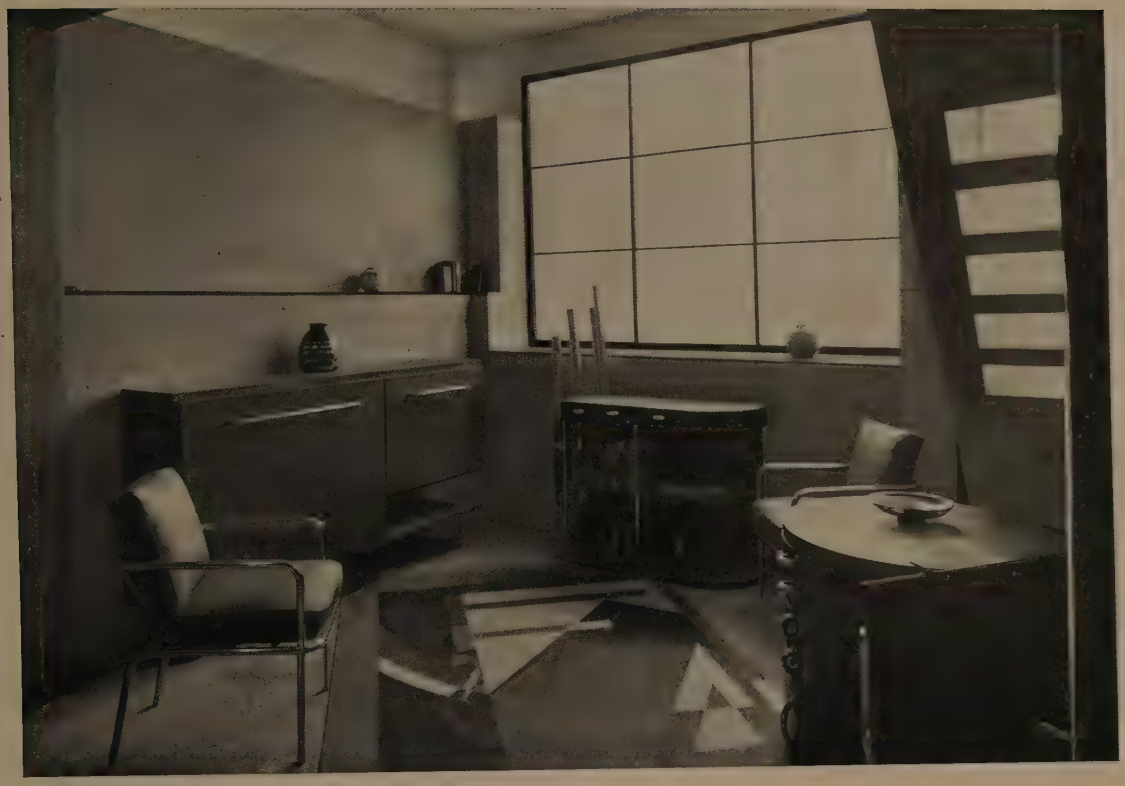
Atelier Primavera, Paris. Study
S. Louis & Mlle. Gueden, Paris. Study

WINDSOR

Michel Roux-Spitz, Paris. Manager's office

Michel Roux-Spitz, Paris. Manager's office

Atelier Primavera, Paris. Office of a bibliophile
Adolf G. Schneck, Stuttgart. Board-room



Lucie Holt le Son, Paris. Study
Francis Jourdain, Paris. Corner of a studio

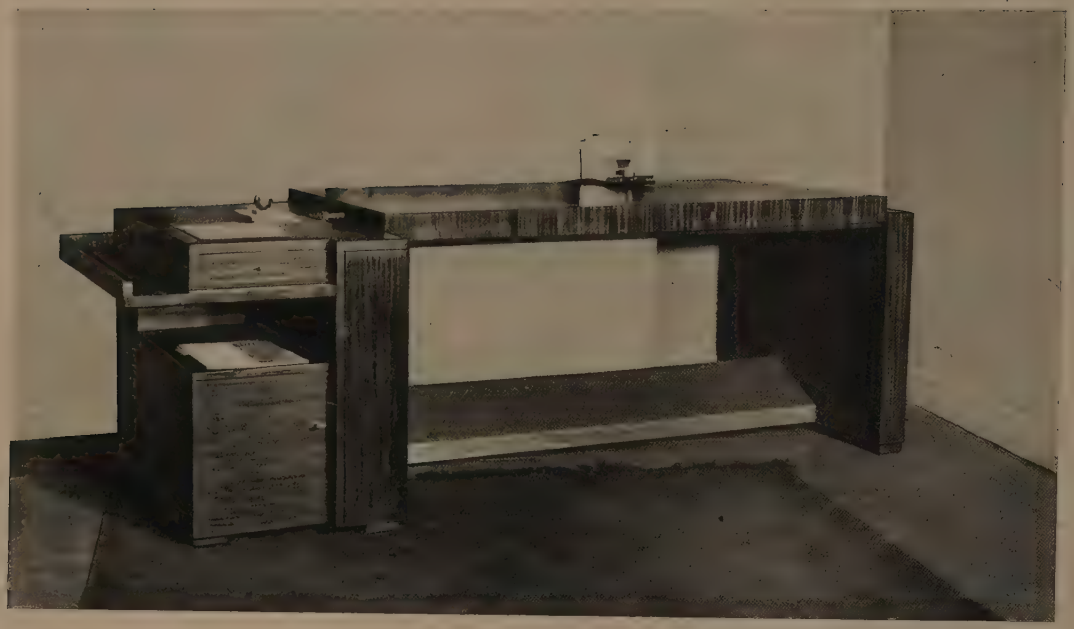
SCHOOL OF ART

Jan Wils, Voorburg. Study
R. Boyer-Gérente and F. Faure, Paris. Study

Heinrich Lauterbach, Breslau. Writing-table
Walter Gropius, Berlin. Study

J. R. Davidson, New York. Ante-room
René Kinsbourg, Paris. President's office

Hanns Hopp, Königsberg. Office and exhibition room



Max Ronneburger, Remscheid. Writing-table
Hanns Hopp, Königsberg. Board-room

Labayen-Aizpurua, San Sebastian. Architect's office
Bowman Brothers, Chicago. Office table

Ruhlmann, Paris. Dumb waiter and writing-table

G. Meyer and Fr. Largiadèr, Zurich. Library

William Dunkel, Zurich. Corner of a study

Harry Rosenthal, Berlin. Study

Armand Weiser, Vienna. Reception room

Fritz Gross, Vienna. Bookshelves and folding desk

Jean M. Frank, Paris. Study

Fritz Schopohl, Berlin. Ante-room

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Howe and Lescaze, New York. Drawing-room

Jean M. Frank, Paris. Part of a drawing-room

Howard T. Fisher, Hubbard Woods, U.S.A. Corner with bookcase

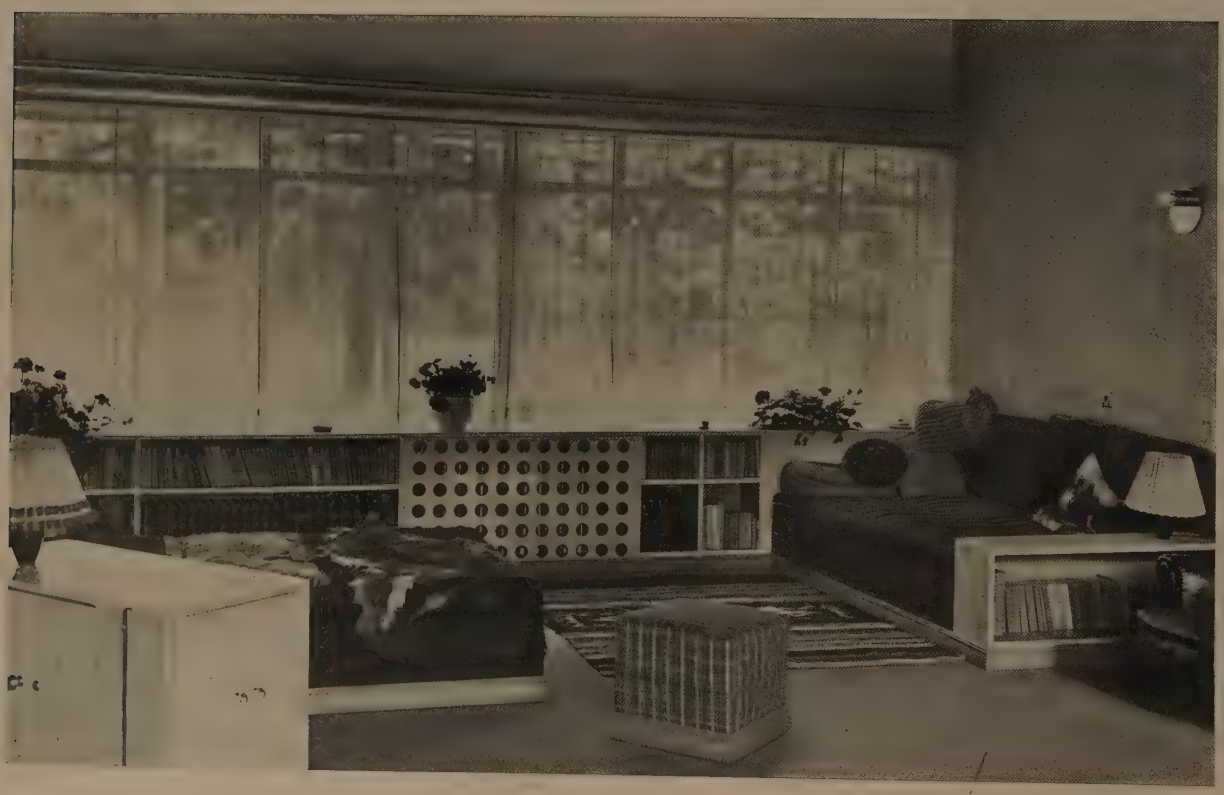
Jean M. Frank, Paris. Music-room

A. B. Nordiska Kompaniet, Stockholm. Drawing-room

Hans Hartl, Essen. Music-room

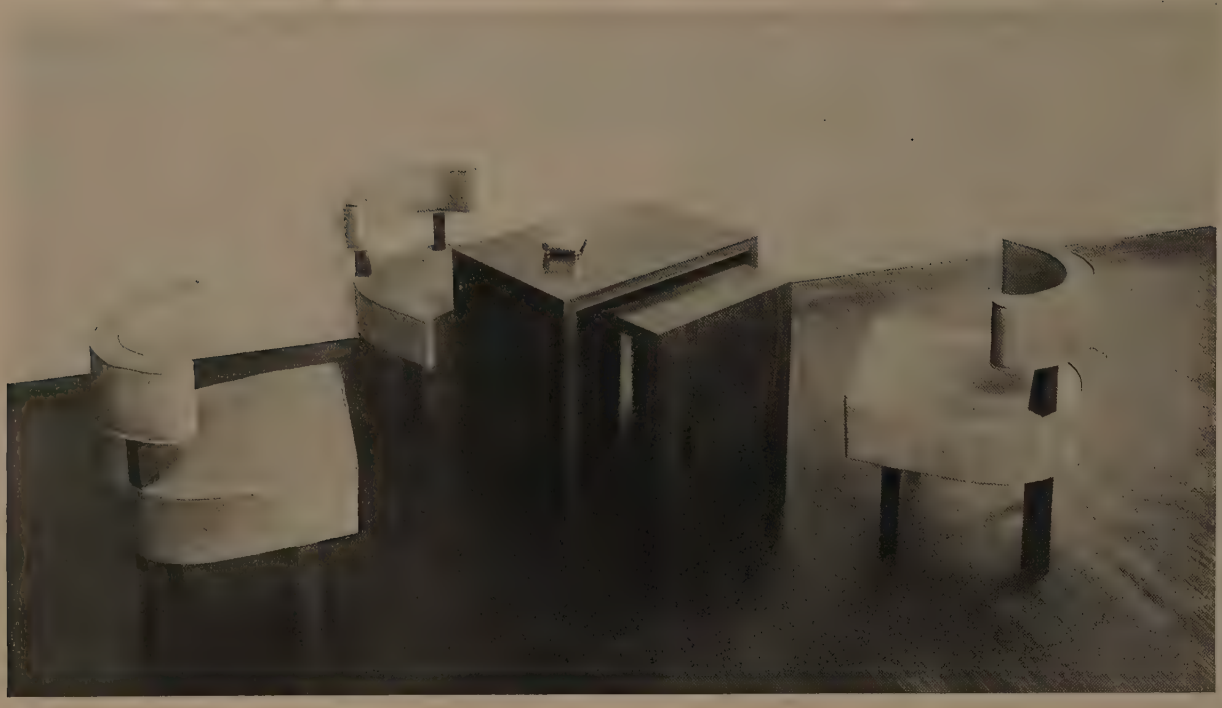
Paul Laszlo, Stuttgart. Living room

Alexander Popp, Vienna. Boudoir



Emil Pohle, Dortmund. Hall
André Lurçat, Paris. Living room

Bernhard Hermkes, Frankfort-on-the-Main. Business woman's study
J. J. Adnet ("Arts français"), Paris. Living room



André Lurçat, Paris. Living room furniture
Heinrich Lauterbach, Breslau. Grand piano

Alfred Gellhorn, Berlin. Music-room

C. E. Rava and S. Larco, Milan. Armchair
Fritz Gross, Vienna. Corner of an interior

C. E. Rava and S. Larco, Milan. Boudoir
Jan Vaněk, Brno. Boudoir

Ernst Lichtblau, Vienna. Bed-sitting room

Gabriel Guévrékian, Paris. Bedroom

Jean M. Frank, Paris. Living room with divan

Fr. A. Breuhaus, Düsseldorf. Bedroom

Fr. A. Breuhaus, Düsseldorf. Bedroom

Hans Hartl, Essen. Dressing-table

Piero Bottoni, Milan. Dressing-table — Jan Vaněk, Brno. Dressing room

Jan Vaněk, Brno. Looking-glass — Robert Block (Studio „Athelia"), Paris. Dressing-table

Eugène Printz, Paris. Dressing room — Atelier Primavera, Paris. Cheval glass

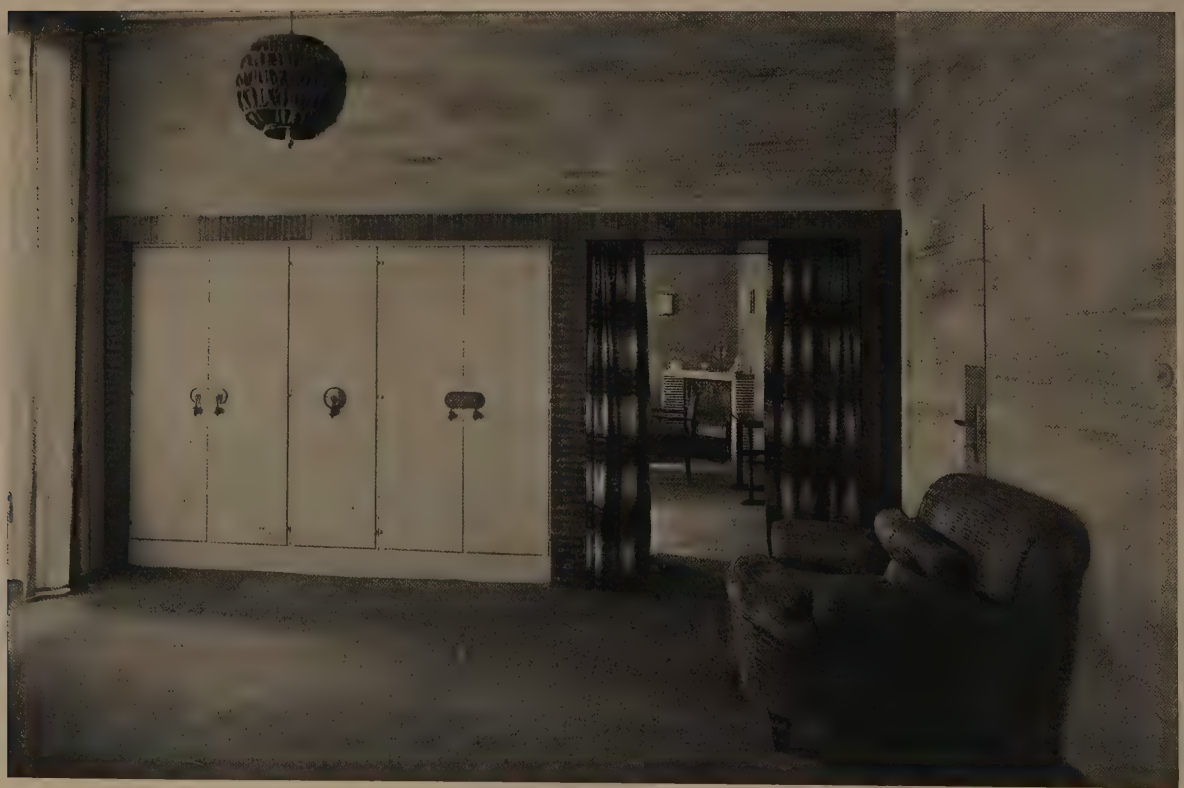
Josef Hillerbrand, Munich. Dressing-table — Ludwig Kozma, Budapest. Wardrobe and writing-desk

Erwin Gutkind, Berlin. Alcove
S. van Ravesteyn, Utrecht. Bedroom

Eugène Printz, Paris. Bedroom

Günter Hirschel-Protsch, Breslau. Lady's bedroom
Schröder and G. Rietveld, Utrecht. Bedroom

Fritz Gross, Vienna. Bedroom
Anton Lorenz, Vienna. Bedroom



Louis Sognot-Charlotte Alix, Paris. Bedroom
K. Hofmann & F. Augenfeld, Vienna. Bachelor's suite

Thilo Schoder, Gera. Bedroom

William Muschenheim, New York. Bedroom in a seaside house
André Lurçat, Paris. Student's room

Easton and Robertson, London. Bedroom and hotel room

J. C. d'Ahetze, Paris. Man's bedroom

Le Corbusier — P. Jeanneret — Ch. Perriand, Paris. Bedroom with divan and bath

K. E. Ort, Brno. Day and night nursery

Marcel Breuer, Berlin. Bedroom
Francis Jourdain, Paris. Gymnasium

S. van Ravesteyn, Utrecht. Living room

Joubert and Petit, Paris. Dining room

Serge Chermayeff (Waring & Gillow), London. Dining room with folding table

Serge Chermayeff (Waring & Gillow), London. Dining and living room

Gebrüder Luckhardt and Anker, Berlin. Dining alcove
René Herbst, Paris. Dining room

Marcel Breuer, Berlin. Dining room
Anton Lorenz, Berlin. Dining room

Walter Dexel, Jena. Dining room — J. J. P. Oud, Rotterdam. Dining room

J. C. d'Ahetze, Paris. Dining-room

Ilonka Karasz ("Amer. Designers"), New York. Dining room — Wolfgang and Paula Hoffman, New York. Dining room

Josef Margold, Berlin. Dining room (1925/6)

Josef Margold, Berlin. Sideboard
Marcel Breuer, Berlin. Dining room

A. B. Nordiska Kompaniet, Stockholm. Writing table and dining room

Herman Rossi ("Amer. Designers"), New York. Dining room in metal and glass

Harry Rosenthal, Berlin. Dining room

Alvar Aalto, Turku (Finland). Living room furniture
Sebastiano Larco, Como. Living room cupboard

Josef Hoffmann, Vienna. Dumb waiter
Alfred Gellhorn, Berlin. Tea table

T. Leighton Pearce, London. Small dining-room — Adolf G. Schneck, Stuttgart. Dining-room

Richard Doecker, Stuttgart. Sideboard — Lucie Holt le Son, Paris. Occasional table

Jean Burkhalter, Helsingfors. Armchair
William Muschenheim, New York. Living room

S. Donald Deskey, New York. (Ypsilanti Reed Furn. Comp.) Wicker Chairs

G. Schaupp, Frankfort-on-the-Main. Conservatory
Thilo Schoder, Gera. Conservatory

Pagano-Pogatschnig, Turin. Veranda

Bernhard Pfau, Düsseldorf. Conservatory
Frette, Libera, Figini, Pollini, Milan. Living room

Bernhard Pfau, Düsseldorf. Conservatory

Robert Block (Studio "Athelia"), Paris. Small bar in a flat

Robert Block (Studio "Athelia"), Paris. Bar

Isaburo Ueno, Kyoto. Bar

Rob Mallet-Stevens, Paris. Café

Birger Jarl Carlstedt, Helsingfors. Bar
Rudolf Fränkel, Berlin. Restaurant

Labayen-Aizpurua, San Sebastian. Seaside restaurant
Carlo Enrico Rava, Milan. Small bar

Djo-Bourgeois, Paris. Bar — Maurice Dufrène, Paris. Bar

Lois Welzenbacher, Innsbruck. Restaurant in the mountains

Leo Nachtlicht, Berlin. Restaurant

Kooperativa Förbundet Arkitektkontoret, Stockholm. Restaurant

Leo Nachtlicht, Berlin. Roof restaurant with movable ceiling

Heinrich Straumer, Berlin. Restaurant in the radio tower Berlin

Labayen-Aizpurua, San Sebastian. Seaside club house
E. May & M. Elsaesser, Frankfort-on-the-Main. Restaurant

Rudolf Fränkel, Berlin. Lobby
Otto Zollinger, Saarbrücken. Beach café

E. May & M. Elsaesser, Frankfort-on-the-Main. Restaurant

Fr. Hitzbleck & E. Scharff, Düsseldorf. Interior of a club house

Michael Rachlis, Berlin. Motor show room

H. A. van Anrooy, Amsterdam. Shop

Wilhelm Riphahn, Cologne. Draper's shop

E. Sundahl & E. Lund, Stockholm. Shoe shop

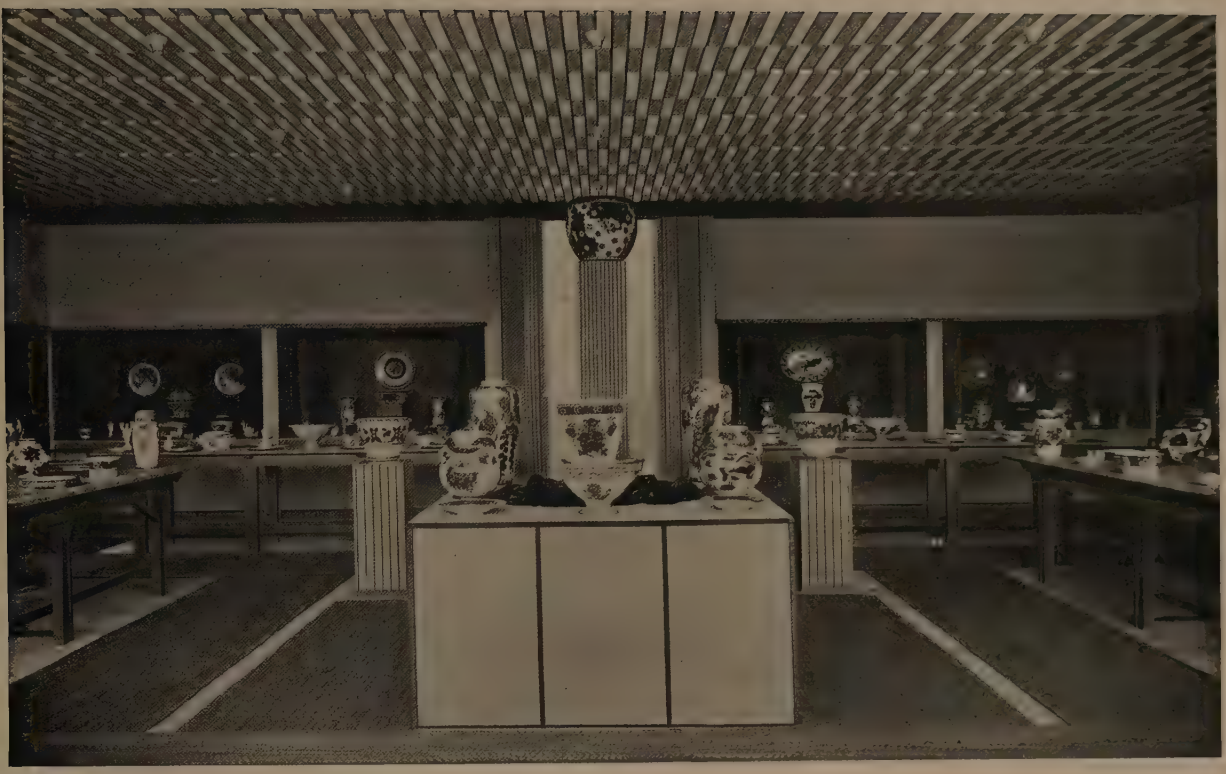
Jock D. Peters, Los Angeles. Shoe shop

Jock D. Peters, Los Angeles. Shoe shop

Oswald Haerdtl, Vienna. Tobacco shop

Eskil Sundahl, Stockholm. Baker's shop

Fernando G. Mercadal, Madrid. Show room
L. Schöppler and E. Kornfeld, Vienna. Cubicles



Helweg-Möller, Copenhagen. Exhibition room
Bruno Paul, Berlin. Exhibition room

Sven Markelius, Stockholm. Tobacco shop
Eskil Sundahl, Stockholm. Grocer's shop

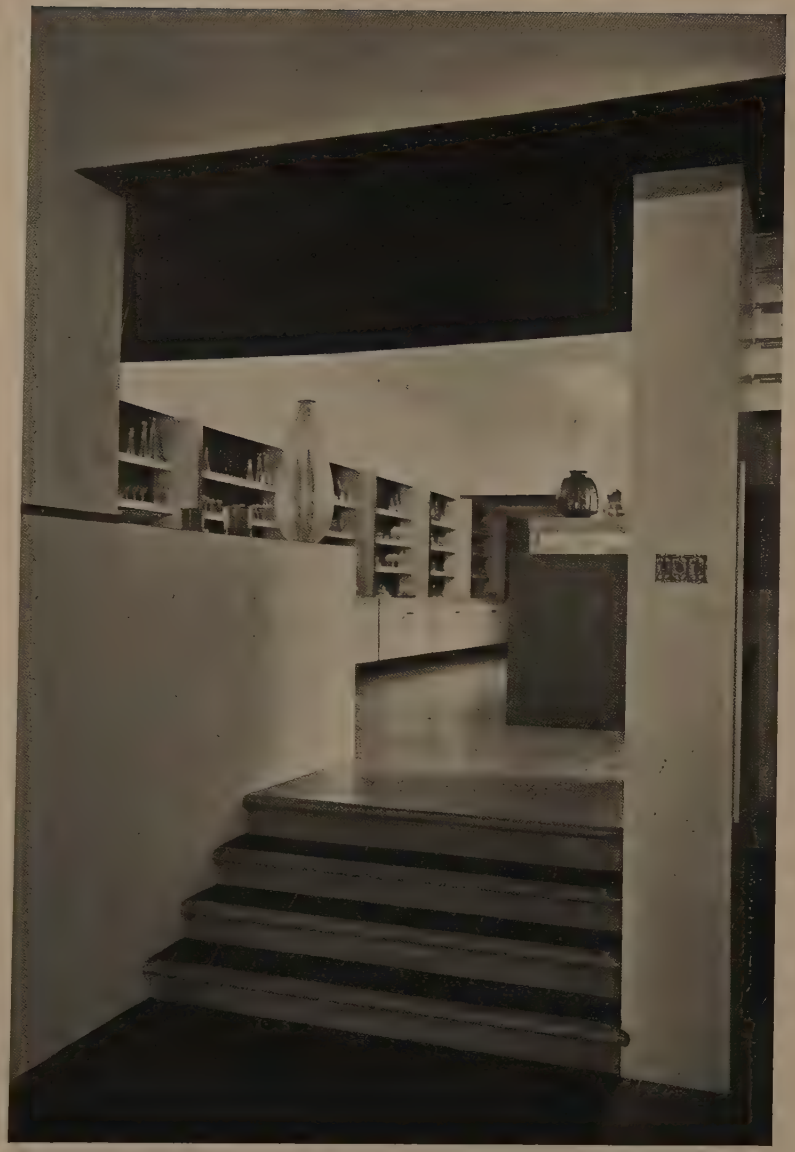
Josef Hoffmann, Vienna. Gramophone shop and confectioner's

Karl Schneider, Hamburg. Exhibition rooms

Ludwig Hilberseimer, Berlin. Lecture- and exhibition room
Josef Hillerbrand, Munich. Exhibition gallery

Ernst Lichtblau, Vienna. Music shop

Hans Heinz Lüttgen, Cologne. Exhibition galleries



A. D. Copier, The Hague. Show room — André Lurçat, Paris. Entrance hall

Armin Meili, Zurich. Hotel lobby — Zuazo, Dominguez & Arniches, Madrid. Entrance hall

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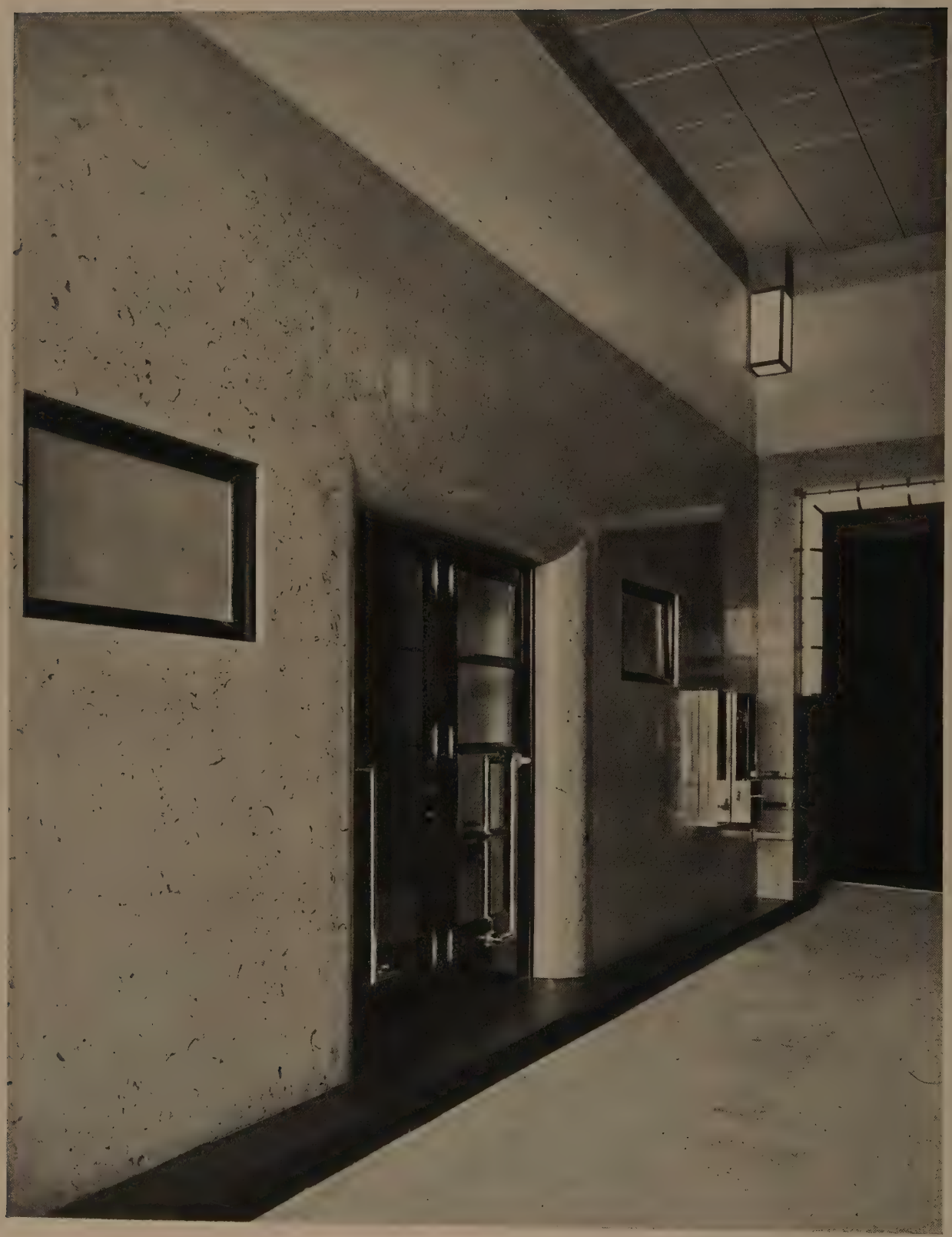
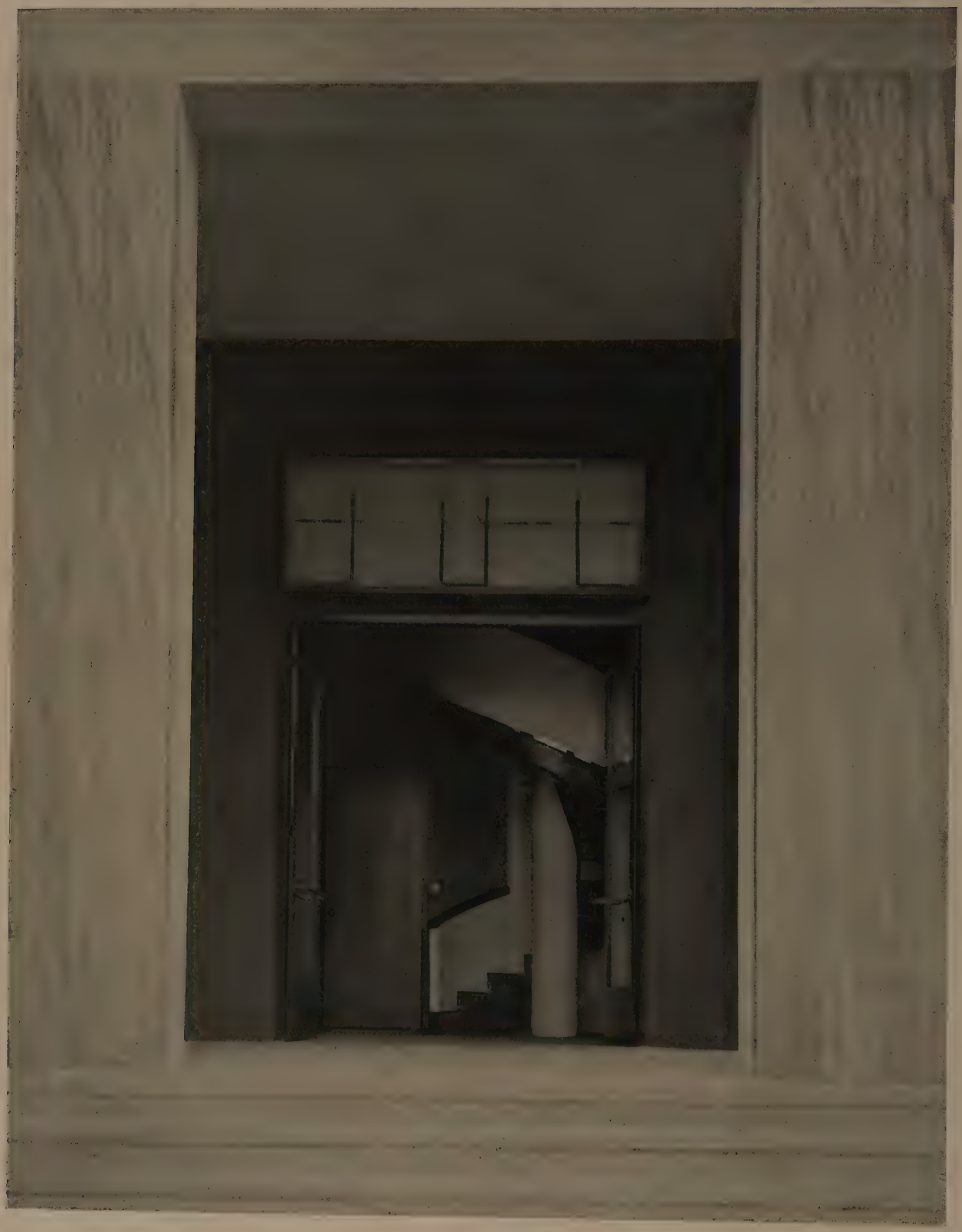


Pagano-Pogatschnig, Turin. Entrance hall

Bernhard Pfau, Düsseldorf. Staircase



C. E. Rava & S. Larco, Milan. Entrance hall

Fr. Meurer & G. Bühnemann, Berlin. Staircase — H. & O. Gerson with Fr. Höger, Hamburg. Staircase

R. Schwarz, Aix-la-Chapelle. Staircase

Dominikus Böhm, Cologne. Staircase

W. M. Dudok, Hilversum. School staircase
Fritz Fuss, Cologne. Staircase

Adolf Abel, Cologne. Winding staircase
Wilhelm Kreis, Dresden. Staircase in a bank

Carl Krayl & Worm, Magdeburg. Staircase wall

Friedrich Ehrmann, Prague. Entrance to a cinema

Max Taut, Berlin. Entrance hall
Walter Gropius, Berlin. Theatre lobby (reconstruction)

Ladislav Machon, Prague. School entrance hall
Fritz Höger, Hamburg. Staircase in a townhall

Paul and Klaus Engler, Berlin. Hall at an Air Port
Vojtech Kerhart, Prague. Staircase

Jan Wils, Voorburg. Open gallery and staircase

Otto Haesler, Celle. School entrance hall
Hans Poelzig, Berlin. Cinema

P. E. Blomstedt, Helsingfors. Union Bank

Josef Gočar, Prague. Booking hall

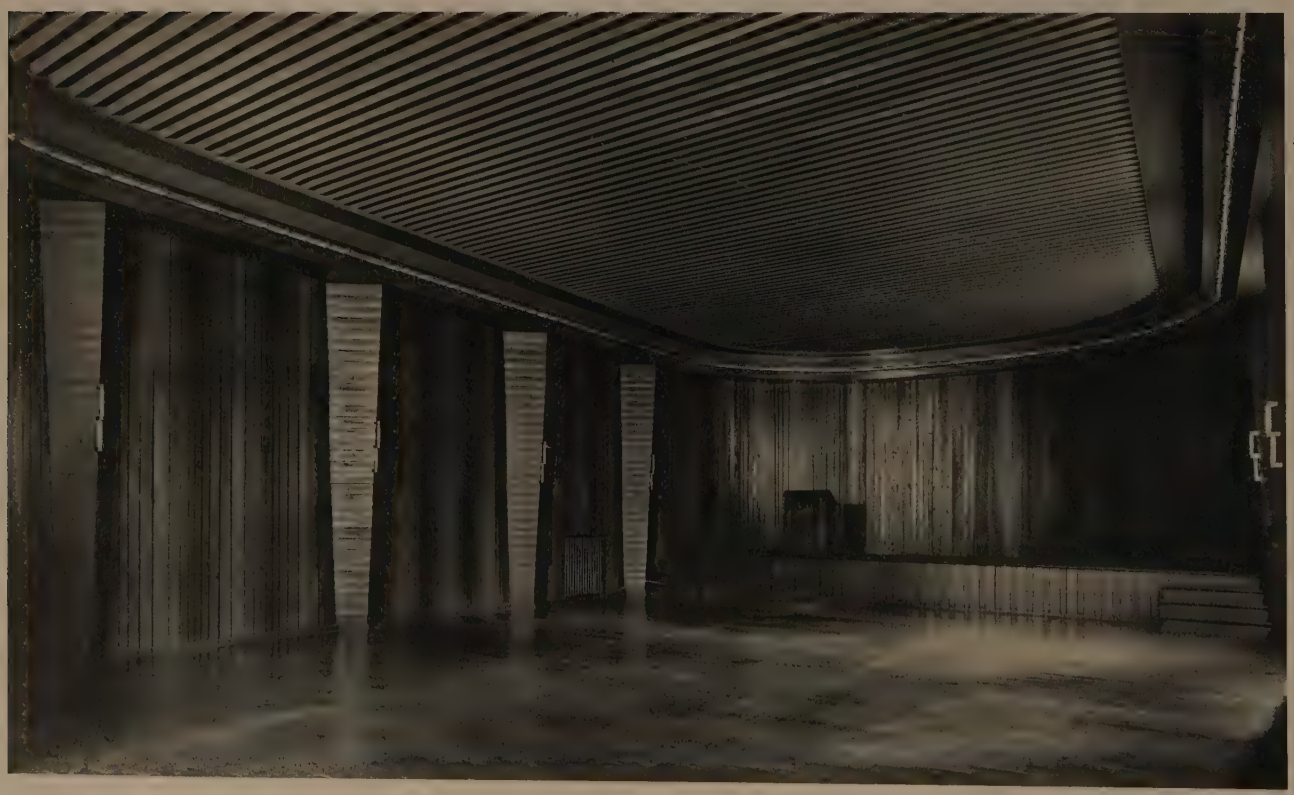
Walter Gropius, Berlin. Employment office

Corbett, Harrison & Macmurray, New York. Exchange hall

Corbett, Harrison & Macmurray, New York. Interior of a bank

Dominikus Böhm, Cologne. Library

Pierre Chareau, Paris. Reading room



S. v. Ravesteyn, Utrecht. Booking office
Paul Zucker, Berlin. University hall

Pierre Chareau, Paris. Hotel entrance hall

Emil Fahrenkamp, Düsseldorf. Hotel lounge

Fr. Bräuning and H. Leu with A. Dürig, Bâle. Hotel lounge

O. Tyl, Prague. Lecture hall

O. R. Salvisberg, Berlin-Zurich. Hall

Clemens Holzmeister, Vienna. Covered walk

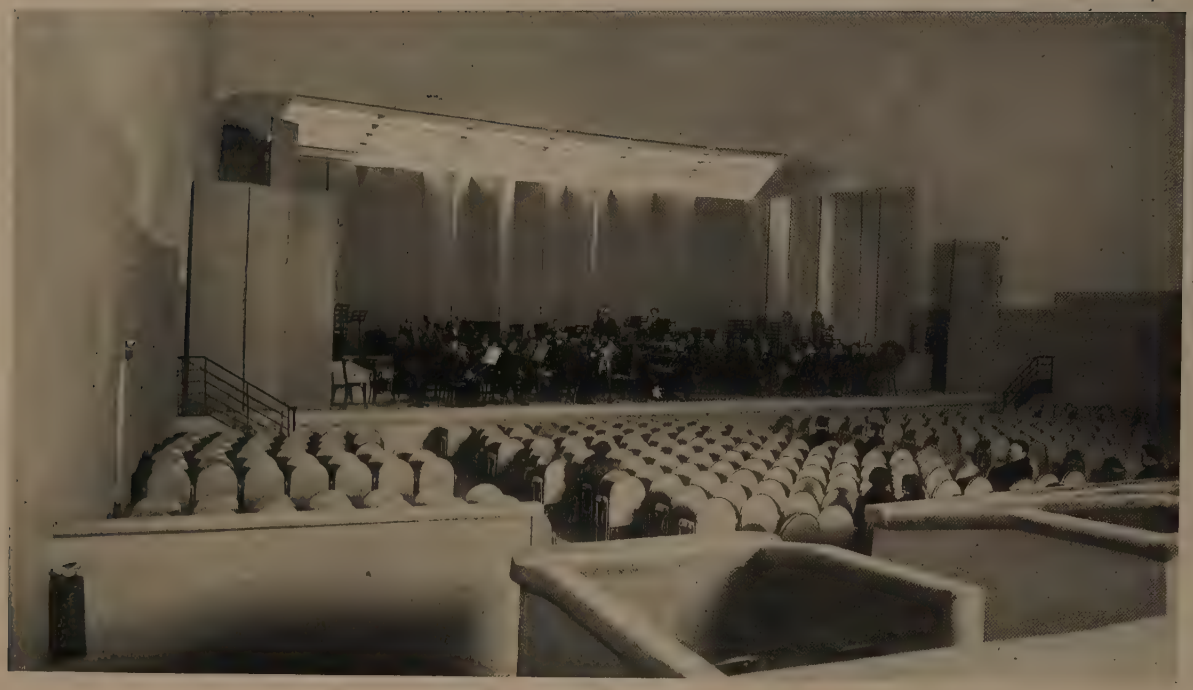
Erich Mendelsohn, Berlin. Cinema hall and exit

Max Taut, Berlin. College hall

Gegello & Kritschewskij, Leningrad. Interior of a theatre

A. & G. Perret, Paris. Concert hall

Alfred Fischer, Essen. Concert hall



Auburtin, Granet & Mattron, Paris. Concert hall
Charles Siclis, Paris. Theatre

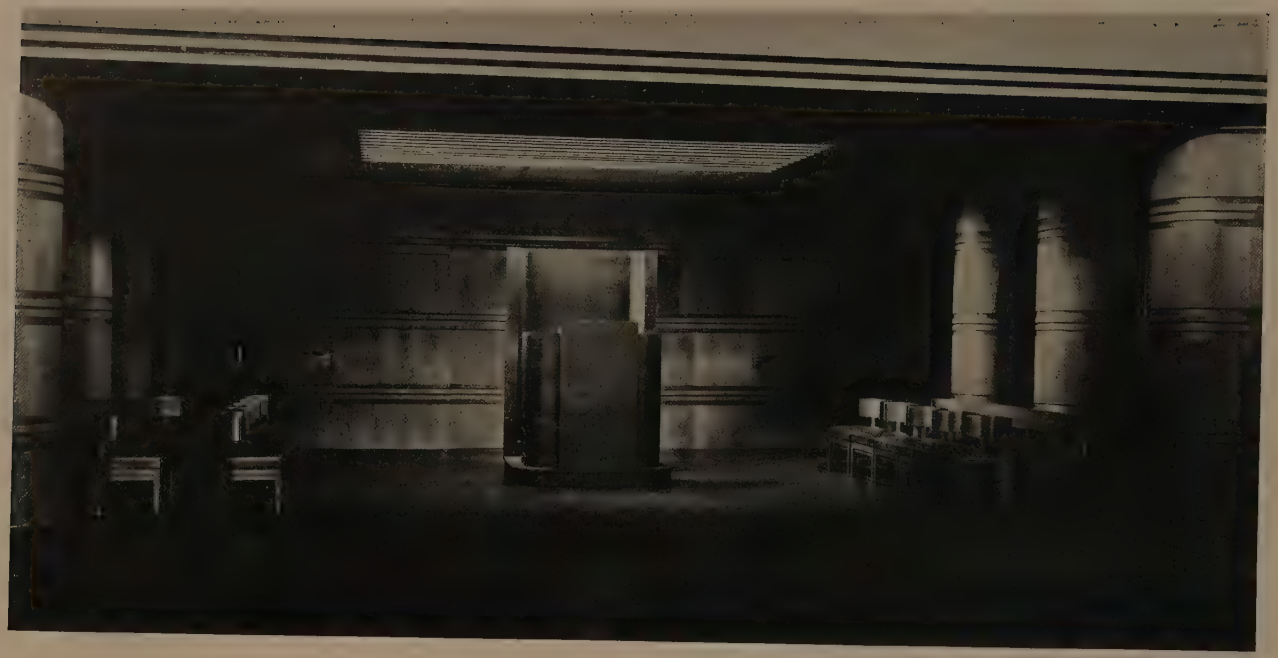
Auburtin, Granet & Mattron, Paris. Concert hall

Hans Schumacher, Cologne. Lecture hall

Karl Wach & H. Rosskotten, Düsseldorf. Parish hall

Erich Mendelsohn, Berlin. Jewish mortuary chapel

Edvard Thomsen and Fritz Schlegel, Copenhagen. Hall of a crematorium



Fritz Nathan, Francfort-on-the-Main. Jewish mortuary chapel

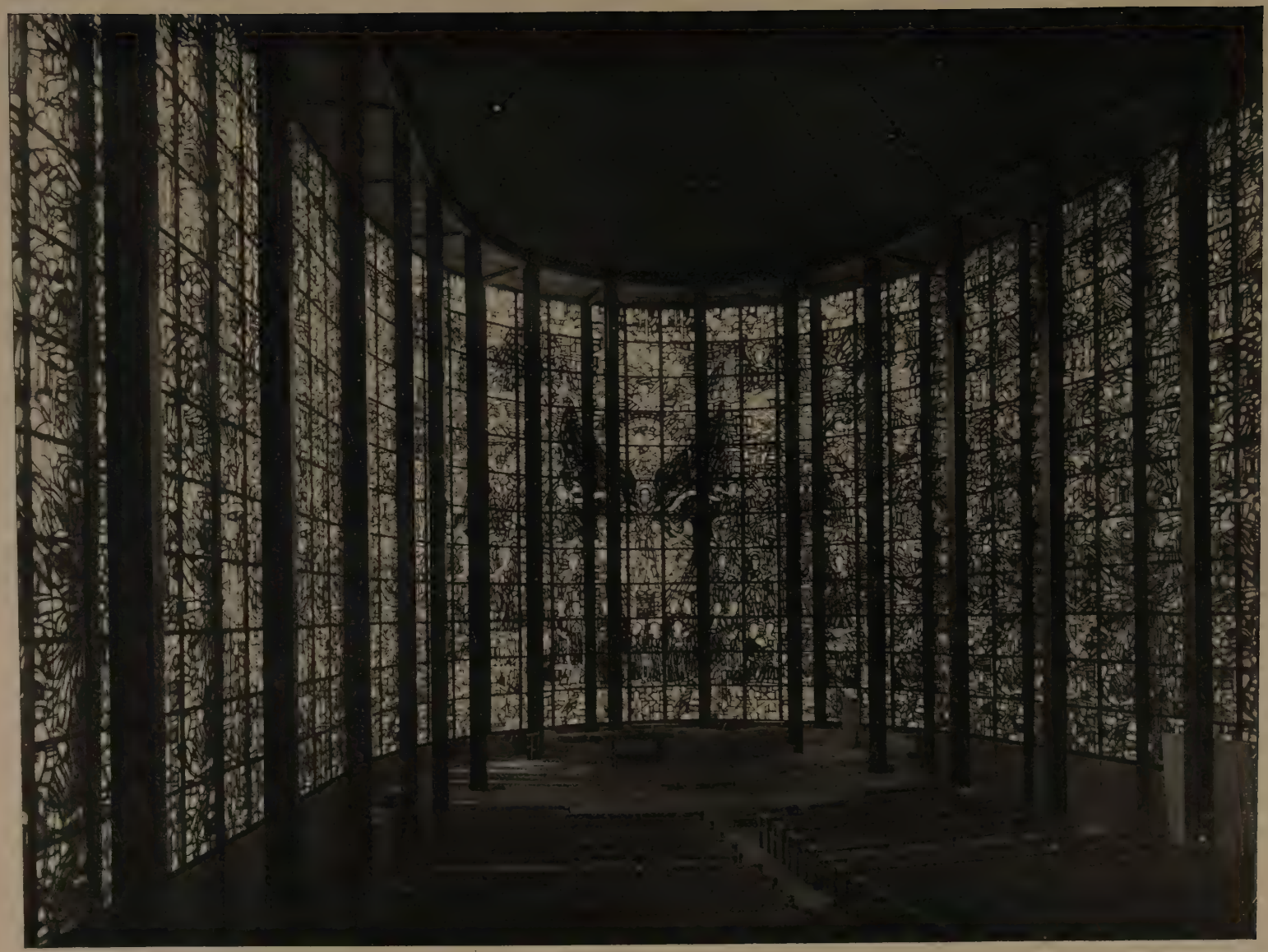
Otto Bartning, Berlin. Baptistery
Gegello & Kritschewskij, Leningrad. Mortuary at a hospital

Martin Weber, Francfort-on-the-Main. Interior of a church

E. Fahrenkamp, Düsseldorf. Aisle of a church

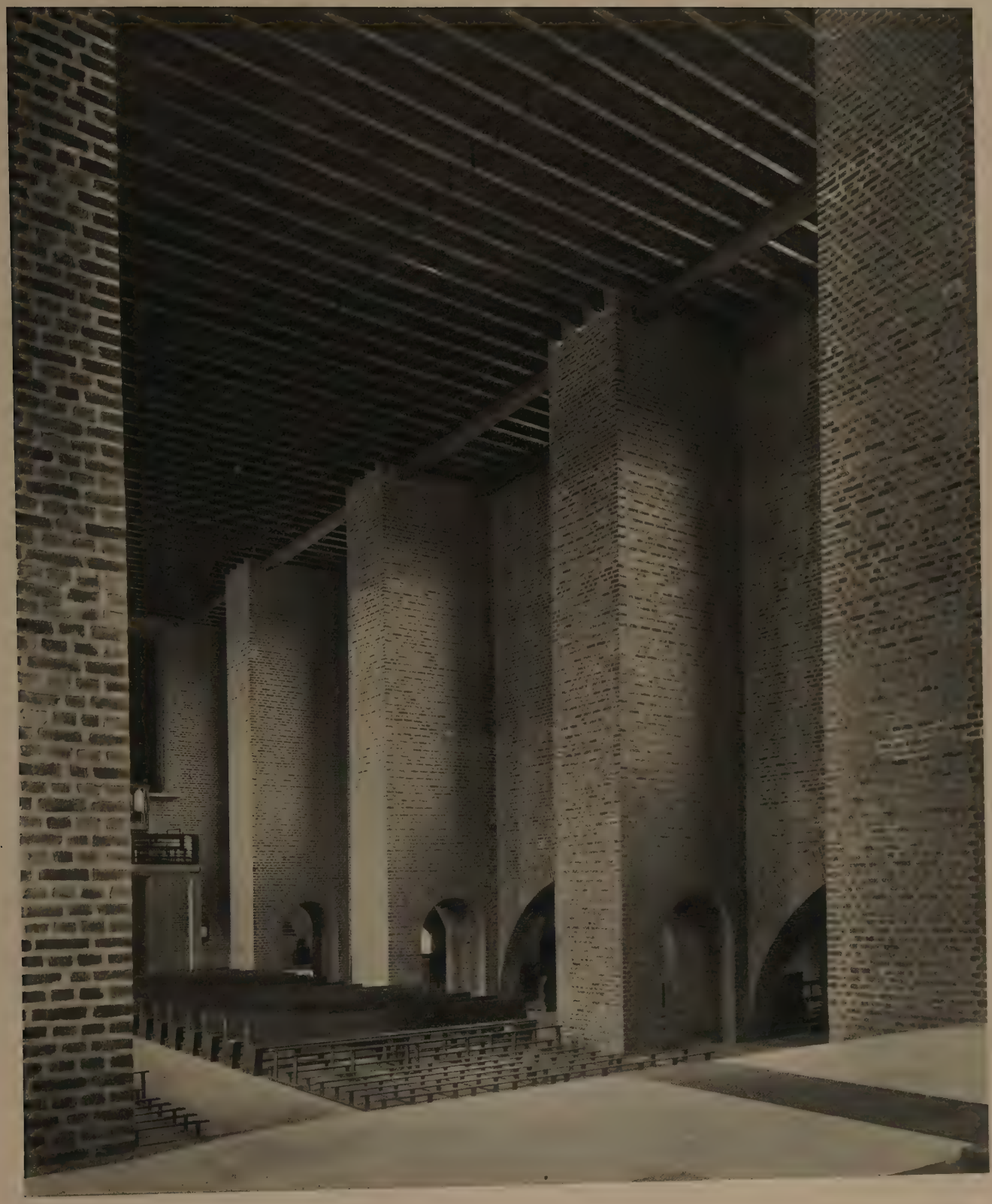
Hans Herkommer, Stuttgart. Choir of a church

Lois Welzenbacher, Innsbruck. Chapel



Otto Bartning, Berlin. Choir of the steel church

Adolf Muesmann, Dresden. Concrete church



Dominikus Böhm, Cologne. Interior of a church

Fritz Landauer, Munich. Synagogue

Dominikus Böhm, Cologne. Interior of a church

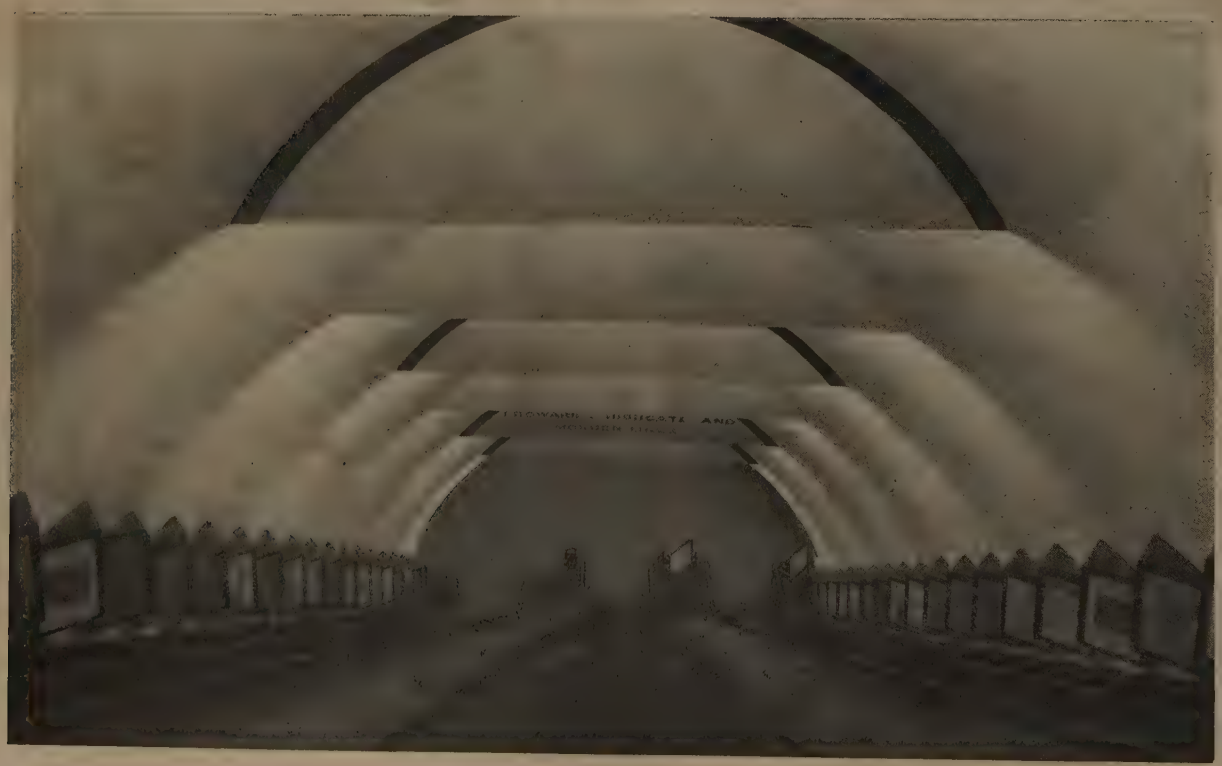
K. N. Jakowlew, Moscow. Staircase in a large shop

Eliel Saarinen, New York. Refectory of a School

Martin Elsaesser, Francfort-on-the-Main. Corridor and swimming bath

Hochbauamt Francfort-on-the-Main. Shelter
Adolf Meyer, Francfort-on-the-Main. Industrial hall

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART



Ture Wennerholm, Stockholm. Covered tennis courts
Adams, Holden and Pearson, London. Escalator at a London underground station

Entreprises Limousin (Arch. Maigrot), Paris. Market hall

Hans Mehrtens, Cologne. Boiler house

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